

ACTION SHEET & Guide

Let's Pass the Reach Act! Ask Your Senators and Representatives to Cosponsor S.1730/H.R. 4022

The bicameral, bipartisan Reach Every Mother and Child Act of 2017 (S.1730 or H.R. 4022) was reintroduced by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Chris Coons (D-DE) and Representatives Dave Reichert (R-WA), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Barbara Lee (D-CA), and Dan Donovan (R-NY). Building on the success of such global health initiatives as PEPFAR and the President's Malaria Initiative, **the 'Reach Act' legislation would enact key reforms that increase the effectiveness and impact of the U.S. government's efforts to end preventable child and maternal deaths globally.**

At the end of the last Congress (in December 2016), this incredibly bipartisan legislation had over half of the House of Representatives and over a third of the Senate as cosponsors – garnering more Congressional support than *any* previous global health bill. **This session, RESULTS is calling on members of Congress to pass the Reach Act into law.**

The U.S. Legacy on Child Survival

With U.S. leadership, the world has cut under-five child deaths and maternal deaths by more than half since 1990. By partnering with developing country governments to deliver quality health services, roll out new vaccines, and improve nutrition for moms and kids, efforts supported by the U.S. taxpayer have helped countries save hundreds of millions of lives. In 2016, USAID helped 82 million women and children access essential, often life-saving, health services. As a leader in maternal and child health, the U.S. also spearheaded diplomatic efforts with the global community to adopt the goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths.

While the drastic decline in both child and maternal deaths is one of the greatest success stories in international development, U.S. engagement remains critical.

- Each year 5.6 million children under the age of five still die of mainly preventable and treatable causes – with diarrhea, pneumonia, and malnutrition being some of the biggest killers.
- While overall child deaths have been decreasing, newborn deaths have not. UNICEF now reports that one million newborns die on the day they are born. 2.6 million newborns do not survive their first month of life.
- Additionally, over 300,000 women die due to complications with pregnancy and childbirth each year. The poorer the household, the greater the risk of maternal death, with 99 percent of the maternal deaths occurring in the developing world.

With cost-effective, evidence-based interventions, and the know-how to drive down the leading killers of moms and kids, this should not be the case.

USAID Reforms to Save More Lives

To better evaluate efforts to reach the goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths, in 2014 USAID's maternal and child health programs underwent an exhaustive review by a high-level panel of business and development leaders (ACES Blue Ribbon Panel). The panel concluded that in order to achieve the goal of ending preventable child and maternal deaths, USAID must first address underlying bureaucratic challenges at the agency.¹

USAID is already implementing some of the panel's proposed reforms, including creating clear benchmarks for success, appointing a Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator, and realigning \$2.9 billion in existing grants to improve health outcomes. But this alone will not be enough. Legislation is needed to ensure progress in implementing the reform efforts is not rolled-back and that USAID is held accountable for the stewardship of tax-payer dollars.

More on the Reach Act

The Reach Act is a bold policy initiative supported by more than 50 diverse non-governmental organizations – including advocacy groups, implementers, and faith-based organizations. The Reach Act will hold USAID accountable for a smarter, more effective approach to ending preventable child and maternal deaths. Requiring a centralized and coherent strategy, the bill will improve coordination and maximize our investments, with returns measured in lives saved and healthy, prosperous communities. The Reach Act enshrines into law:

- An ambitious, **coordinated U.S. Government strategy** with **clear, measurable goals** and increased **accountability and transparency**.
- A focus on the **poorest and most vulnerable populations** that recognizes the unique needs within different countries and communities.
- The scale up the most **effective, evidence-based interventions** with a focus on country ownership and alignment with existing maternal, newborn, and child survival plans.
- A Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator responsible for **oversight** of resources directly linked to reducing maternal and child mortality and the budget, staffing, and planning necessary to ensure **coordination and effectiveness** of the programs.
- Measures for USAID to use **new, innovative funding** sources to complement U.S. investments.

With a strategy that puts kids and mothers first, we have the chance to make sure every child, regardless of where she's born, has a healthy start to life. But, Congress needs to act.

Demonstrate Strong Constituent Support with Letters

Write letters to your representative and senators to demonstrate constituent support for action and gather your community to help!

¹ Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel Report on USAID, June 2014
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/blue-ribbon-advisoy-panel.pdf>

1. Tell your members of Congress:
 - That you believe that now is the time to create a healthy, bright future for millions of mothers and children worldwide.
 - Emphasize that **this isn't just a pipe dream**. The evidence shows that the end of preventable maternal and child deaths is possible.
 - Explain that the Reach Act (S.1730 /H.R. 4022) will help **turn this ambitious goal into a viable plan, and ask for your Member of Congress to co-sponsor this bill**.
2. Use the EPIC format like the sample below to write to Congress or the media. Increase your impact by personalizing your letter with a story of your own (or one you've read that has had a particular impact on you).

E ngage	In too many places in the world, the most dangerous day in a child's life is the day they are born. For a girl child, too often the next most dangerous day is when she gives birth herself.
P roblem	One million children annually don't survive their first day of life. Over two million don't survive the first month. Over 300,000 women die each year from complications with pregnancy and child birth. The travesty is the vast majority of these deaths happen in poor countries and most are completely preventable.
I nform about the solution	The Reach Every Mother and Child Act (S.1730 / H.R. 4022) is the most bipartisan global health bill on record. The Reach Act aims to improve USAID's impact and effectiveness in saving the lives of the most vulnerable moms and kids. It was reintroduced this Congress by Senators Collins and Coons and Representatives Reichert, McCollum, Lee, and Donovan. The legislation calls for a coordinated strategy for ending preventable child and maternal deaths and sets clear targets for reaching the poorest people with effective, evidence-based interventions.
C all to action!	No matter where they are born, women and children deserve the opportunity to survive and thrive. Senator(s)/ Representative XXXX, will you co-sponsor this critical legislation? <i>**If they are a cosponsor already** Senator(s)/ Representative XXXX, will you speak to leadership about moving the bill this year?</i>

Need More Background Information? Use this [fact sheet](#) or find more resources [here](#).

Reach Act #LettersGetLOUD Resources

Goals and Actions

The #LettersGetLOUD campaign has been a great way to generate letters in support of anti-poverty policies in Congress and engage new advocates. Our goal through June is to harness #LettersGetLOUD to create momentum to pass the Reach Every Mother and Child Act (S.1730, H.R.4022). We'll use June and the IC as a key moments to get LOUD. More to come.

You can help create momentum by mobilizing your community to get your Senators and Representatives to cosponsor the Reach Act. You can do this by:

- Organizing #LettersGetLOUD meetings in your community.
- Inviting community members to join you in delivering letters to your members of Congress and staff, and posting letters on social media.
- Generating print media calling on Senators and Reps. to cosponsor the bills, or thanking them for cosponsoring and calling on them to move the bill toward passage.

If your members are already cosponsors, thank them and move them up the Champion Scale to become an "Advocate" for the passage of the Reach Act. Possible "Advocate" actions include:

- Asking them to get other members of Congress to cosponsor the bill.
- Asking them to speak to Senate Foreign Relations or House Foreign Affairs leadership, urging them to move the bill forward through the committee.
- Asking them to write an oped on the Reach Act around Mother's Day.

We encourage everyone who has generated letters to share them on social media, re-share them if they are already on social media, and pack them in the suitcase for DC in July.

Resources for Reaching Women and Children in Your Community

You can engage people in #LettersGetLOUD by **inviting them in** to activities you organize, or **going out** to them where they are. Decide which you'd like to do or do a bit of both. See the list of groups to consider below. Let us know if you have other good ideas too.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTA • Dining for Women • Mom Groups • Women's Book Clubs • General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) • National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) • MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Meet Up Online • Local Women's March • American Association of University Women (AAUW) • Soroptimist International • P.E.O International Sisterhood • Zonta International & Student Clubs for Zonta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mormon Women for Ethical Government • Delta Sigma Theta • Sigma Gamma Rho • Zeta Phi Beta • American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) • Alpha Kappa Alpha • League of Women Voters • Junior League
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith Community Groups for women and children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Departments and Student Clubs: Feminist, Global Studies, Social Work, Human Development, Family Science, Women's Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Organization for Women (NOW)
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Sample Meeting Agenda

The agenda below requires approximately one hour. Adapt to fit your style and timeframe.

I. Setting the Stage – 15 Minutes

1 min: Welcome and acknowledge people for being there.

“Thanks to all of you for coming. There are a lot of ways you could be spending the day, and I want to thank all of you for coming out and learning more about how YOU can play a role in the movement to end poverty.”

1 min: Purpose of this gathering.

“Our goal in 2018 is to grow our movement to end poverty and make our voices, your voices heard. Across the nation we are organizing our communities to write letters to members of Congress about ending poverty, and then we’ll hand-deliver them to congressional offices.”

3 min: What is at stake?

“What is at stake? To put it simply: millions of lives and years of progress fighting poverty in the U.S. and around the world are at stake.”

“Last year, the White House moved to drastically cut funding for global anti-programs. These programs impact real people around the world. Without them, fewer girls would be in school, and fewer kids would survive to their fifth birthday. People would simply have to go without lifesaving medical treatment for diseases like tuberculosis and malaria. While the proposed cuts failed last year, thanks in large part to push back from constituents like you, Congress is deciding right now what will happen in the year ahead. Let’s make sure they know that now is the time for leadership, not retreat, in the fight against global poverty.”

9 min: Get centered and do introductions (shorten by asking just 1-2 people to share).

“Before we take action, let’s see who’s in the room tonight and get in touch with why we are here. Also, can you all be sure to sign our sign in sheet? First, can the RESULTS volunteers briefly say their name and how many years you’ve been involved?”

“For those of you who are new to this, would you tell us your name and briefly why taking actions on poverty is important to you.” (Other possible questions, “What are you committed to in life?” or “Who do you want to be in the world?”)

Afterward, “Thank you all for sharing what is important to you. We have a lot in common. And many of you can use what you just shared in the upcoming letter-writing exercise.”

II. The Basics of RESULTS – 2 to 10 Minutes

2 min: What is RESULTS?

“So, what is RESULTS? RESULTS is movement of passionate, committed, everyday people. Together we use our voices to influence political decisions that will bring an end to poverty. As volunteers, we receive training, support, and inspiration to become skilled advocates. In time, we learn to effectively advise policy makers, guiding them toward decisions that will improve access to health, education, and economic opportunity. Together we realize the incredible power we possess to use our voices to change the world. “

Share a brief story about a success your local group has had in your RESULTS advocacy (e.g. a notable lobby meeting, a distinctive media victory, a powerful volunteer story)

8 min: More on RESULTS. (This is optional if you have time and want to give more information about RESULTS and your work)

1. Show the “Voices that Change the World” video (2 minutes):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2X674DiySU>
2. Share an example of successes we’ve had as an organization in advancing and protecting programs.
3. Share a local example of how you have educated and moved your members of Congress up the Champion Scale: http://www.results.org/skills_center/champion_scale
4. Share a few more details about your group:
 - RESULTS partners meet twice per month to plan and take action.
 - During one of those meetings, we participate in a national webinar to learn more about an issue, learn to speak powerfully, and take action to influence Congress.
 - We also meet to take action to influence our decision makers through face-to-face meetings, writing letters, making calls, generating media, and other community actions.

III. Why Letters Matters – 6 Minutes

4 min: Why should you write letters? Is Congress even listening?

“It might be hard to believe right now, but the answer is yes. The Congressional Management Foundation asked staffers on Capitol Hill to rank the most effective ways to influence Congress. What topped the list?

1. In-person visits from constituents
2. Contact from one constituent representing a group of others
3. Personalized individual communications

Writing this letter, you’ll hit all three because we will take your letter with other personalized letters from across the community to an in-person meeting with our congressional offices. In fact, we would love you to join us at these meetings. If you are interested, we can talk about details at the end of the meeting.”

2 min: What will one letter do? “You’re not alone in this. Your letter, along with thousands of others across the country, are being hand-delivered to Congress.”

“Our volunteers have been doing this for decades. What’s been the response? Too many to count. They range from a cell phone call from a member of Congress to a volunteer, a shout-out on the floor of the House of Representatives, congressional staff tracking people down at work to follow up, a response from a representative in the newspaper...to say nothing of laws passed, policies changed, and literally, BILLIONS of dollars in funding directed to programs that help people move out of poverty. “

IV. Let’s Write Letters – about 30 minutes

2 min: Here are some pointers for our letter writing:

- *Make it personal.* Introduce yourself. Draw from the template letter in the Action Sheet but customize it with your own ideas and personal experiences. Clearly explain why you care.
- *Make it local.* If you can, explain how the issue impacts people in your state.
- *Include a strong call to action.* State clearly what you expect Congress to do and ask for a response.

12-15 min: Write Letters. Find Global Poverty Action Sheets on the Reach Act can be found here: <http://www.results.org/take-action/resources>

8-20 min: Read Your Letters Out LOUD: This is a fun and empowering experience for the whole group. People get excited when they both speak it themselves and hear it from others – you are literally using your voice to end poverty.

Share on Social Media and Inspire others. You can take your #LettersGetLOUD experience to the next level, by asking someone at the meeting to record you reading your letter on a camera or smartphone, then share the video on social media (note: never record or upload a video without the person’s permission). It is a great way to alert both lawmakers and friends about the issue of poverty and your role in trying to end it. For tips on sharing your #LettersGetLOUD activities online, check out our Social Media Tip Sheet: http://www.results.org/uploads/files/Social_Media_Tip_Sheet_Letters.pdf

IV. Invitation to Take the Next Action in the Movement – 5 Minutes

“Lastly, we want to give everyone an opportunity to continue to make a difference. Here are some ways:

- **Who is up for writing letters again?** We know from experience that we have to keep repeating our message to lawmakers to cut through all the noise they are getting. This is just our first action for #LettersGetLOUD. We’re going to keep at until we know they’ve gotten the message. Who wants to join us?

- **Who knows other people or groups who might be interested in writing?** The more people we engage in this work, the faster we reach our goal of ending poverty. Are there groups or individuals you know who would be interested in doing this with us?
- **Who would like to help deliver the letters?** We are setting up a local meeting with Sen./Rep. _____ on _____ (date). We would like to have a large group of letter writers go with us. It shows them that there is a strong constituency of support for these issues. And if you've never been to a lobby meeting before, no worries. You can take as large or as small a role as you like and we will make sure everyone is prepared before we even walk in the door.
- **Who is curious about what our chapter does and wants to learn more?** If you like what you've heard, we'd love for you to become a member of our local RESULTS group.
- **Would you like to become a member of our Action Network?** If you are not in the position to join our group for meetings each month, would you be willing to be part of our local Action Network. This is a group of people who care about poverty and are willing to take regular action on our issues as needed, through e-mails, phone calls, letters to the editor, and even attending lobby meetings if you're able. We would contact you via e-mail with all the information you need to take action. Would you be interested in joining our Action Network?
- **Who would like to learn about our International Conference?** This is RESULTS' biggest event of the year. We meet in Washington, DC this July 14-17. Hundreds of advocates from around the world attend each year to hear from top-notch speakers and get advanced training on advocacy and organizing in your community. It culminates with all of us going up to Capitol Hill to lobby our members of Congress on our issues. And this year, we'll be delivering our #LettersGetLOUD letters in those meetings. It is a fantastic experience. Is anyone interested in learning more?"

Say thank you and capture everyone's contact information: name, phone, email, address, and interests.

V. Using #LettersGetLOUD to Grow Groups and Action Networks

1. Send the contact information for people who want to continue their engagement to Mark Campbell (mccampbell@results.org) so they can be added to our national database. The people who join your group or Action Network will receive actions once per month from RESULTS. But note, the actions you offer them locally will determine whether they become active advocates in your group or action network.
2. Put the new people in your local database.
3. Report your #LettersGetLOUD event: on the Outreach Report Form for Global Poverty: www.tinyurl.com/2018OutreachReportForm
4. Make plans to follow up with each person who has expressed interest in continuing their involvement. To learn how to engage them in your local Action Network, refer to Activist Toolkit: http://www.results.org/skills_center/working_with_the_community

5. Invite them to meet your member of Congress or their staff to deliver letters. Learn to set up meetings here: http://www.results.org/skills_center/working_with_congress. Remember to report lobby meetings here: <http://www.tinyurl.com/2018LobbyReportForm>